

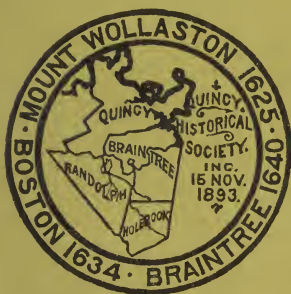
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The Early Schools of Braintree.

By

SAMUEL A. BATES.



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SOUTH BRAINTREE:
FRANK A. BATES,
1899.



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By

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THE EARLY SCHOOLS OF BRAINTREE.

Soon after the settlement of Massachusetts Colony by Winthrop and others in 1630, the government took measures to insure an education to every child in its jurisdiction whether its parents were rich or poor. "An order of the General Court made the 3d month," 1636, reads thus: "The chosen men of the townes are to see that parents traine up their children in learninge, labor, and imployments; if not, upon presentment of the Grand Jury, or other information of their neglect, the sayd Townsmen are subject to fine. They may impose fines upon such parents as refuse to give the account of their children's education.

"With consent of two magistrates they have power to put for apprentice such children whose parents are not able and fit to bring them up."

"Every township, or such as are deputed for the town affayres, shall present to the Quarter Court all idle and unprofitable persons, and all children who are not diligently employed per their parents;

which Court shall have power to dispose of them for their own welfare and common good." The above statute reveals to us the views of our ancestors on the subject of education. It clearly shows that *free schools* were considered one of the corner-stones of a good government. As further proof of this statement the town of Boston (of which the territory of Braintree was then a part, although not a house had been built within its limits) on August 6, 1636, held a general meeting of the richer inhabitants, at which money was subscribed towards the maintenance of a free schoolmaster for the youth, Mr. Daniel Maud being chosen thereunto. Among the subscribers are several names who afterward settled in this town, but did not remain long, the only one named who became a permanent settler being James Penniman, who built a house in 1637 at the foot of Penn's Hill, and left numerous descendants.

This throws a little light on the manner of supporting the public schools of Braintree a few years later. The town of Braintree was incorporated May 13, 1640, O. S., and so important did they consider the question of a free school that they the same year ordered the land recovered of William Coddington, and for which they were compelled by the court to pay about 98 pounds, and which contained about 143 acres, to be called the School Land, and the income thereof to be applied to the support of free schools in the town of Braintree ;

and it was so applied until Quincy was incorporated in 1792, when it was divided between Braintree, Quincy and Randolph. This land must have been considered more valuable than other lands in Braintree, as the town was compelled to pay nearly 14 shillings an acre, while Boston was selling much land for 3 shillings per acre. It is probably on account of its being near to tide water, and consequently more valuable. The early history of our schools is involved in obscurity. Only in two or three instances are they even alluded to for about 30 years. In 1648 Henry Flint sold the schoolhouse to Mr. Doctor John Morley with the condition that if the said Morley should remove from the town, Mr. Flint should have the house again by paying the sum of seven pounds. It appears that there was a schoolhouse occupied by somebody before 1648. There are reasons for thinking that Henry Flint, who was called teacher, was the schoolmaster of most of those early years, and until his death, which took place April 27, 1668, Doctor John Morley may have held the position for a brief period.

The old schoolhouse of 1648 may be the one that stood by the side of town brook and near the meeting house until 1701, when a new one was built, and the old one let to Benjamin Webb for the storage of hay until 1716 when he purchased it of the town for three pounds. In Feb. 1668, the annual income of the school land was given for the salary

of the schoolmaster, and make it up to twenty pounds, besides what every child must give.

“In 1679, Benjamin Tompson the schoolmaster shall have this year for his salary, thirty pounds and a piece of land to set a house on.” It seems that it was not the commencement of his teaching, but rather they raised his salary. How long he had taught we know not, The same year it was agreed that every child should carry in to the schoolmaster, one half a cord of wood beside the quarter money every year.

In 1681 he was paid from the rent of the town land fifteen pounds and fifteen pounds by a town rate. This is the first time the town raises money by taxation for the support of a school.

In 1696 it appears that he had not been paid all his salary, but the town voted that Benjamin Tompson, having kept a grammar school many years, he should receive ten pounds in addition to the income of the school land, at the same time discharging the town from all former debts or arrearages to this day, excepting what he can obtain of the rates in constables' hands which is yet due. To this vote Benjamin Tompson dissented. Benjamin Tompson continued to teach the school until about 1699.

August 18, 1699, Mr. Nathaniel Ells came to Braintree as their Town schoolmaster. He taught but one year. He afterward was pastor of the church in Scituate, and died August 25, 1750, aged 73.

Sept. 5, 1700, Jeremiah Wise began to teach school in Braintree for the sum of 30 pounds a year. Mr. Ells and Mr. Wise were both graduates of Harvard College, the first graduating in 1699, and the latter in 1700.

In 1701, the town voted that the rent of the town lands shall continue as part of the salary, and also that the parent or master shall pay five shillings per year for each scholar. Scholars from out of town shall pay twenty shillings a year. Provided also, that any poor person who shall find themselves unable to pay can have an abatement on application to the selectmen. Any deficiencies that may arise shall be raised by a town rate. On the same day John Veasey was elected the school-master, if the selectmen can agree with him. He graduated from Harvard in 1700. He was probably a native of Braintree. He taught until June 1703.

Mr. Benjamin Thompson and the town having mutually agreed to settle all differences between them for the sum of five pounds, he, June 12, 1700, gave the town "a mutual and everlasting discharge." He began his second term of service June 1, 1703, and continued until about 1709. He was a son of Rev. William Thompson, born in Braintree July 14, 1642, graduated at Harvard in 1662, died April 13, 1714.

Samuel Veasey, probably a native of Braintree, in 1690 made a will bequeathing twenty pounds for

the maintenance and use of the schools of Braintree. He died in Boston in December, 1690. A memorandum made by the selectmen, March 6, 1709-10, says, "There is fourteen pounds lawful money being part of Mr. Samuel Veasey's gift to the school in Samuel Payne's hand. The other part being six pounds is in Mr. Samuel Marshall's hand of Boston, merchant.

In 1717, the town voted to demand, and if need be, sue Mr. Marshall for the money, and July 22, 1717, they again "voted Deacon Moses Payne, the present town treasurer, take of Mr. Samuel Marshall of Boston, four pounds in bills of credit, in lieu of the six pounds yet remaining in his hands that is due to the town of a legacy given to said town by Mr. Samuel Veasey, in and by his last will and testament and give said Marshall a full discharge for said legacy."

The second schoolhouse was built in 1699.

At the annual meeting of that year, a vote to build was passed, but four persons dissented.

Since the building of the first schoolhouse, the centre of population had removed southward, and the majority of the voters were in favor of having the public buildings in a place which would accommodate the most people. In May, 1699, they voted "that the new schoolhouse should be built in the road, between Clement Cook's house and Gregory Belcher's, hard by the white oak tree, and the dimensions should be twenty feet long, sixteen feet

wide and seven feet between joynts. Mr. Caleb Hobart, Deacon Nathaniel Wales, Lieut. Samuel Penniman, Ensign Benjamin Savil, and Sergeant James Brackett were chosen to erect and finish a new schoolhouse. The selectmen were ordered to make a rate in order to the building said schoolhouse, and that it be finished with all convenient speed. Thus we see how the old house was removed from near the town brook in the hollow, to the foot of Penn's Hill.

The successor of Benjamin Tompson was Samuel Fiske, who taught in 1710 for a brief period. He was the son of Rev. Moses and Sarah (Symmes) Fisk, born in Braintree April 6, 1689. He was paid June, 1710, the sum of 8 pounds, 4 shillings.

Joseph Adams commenced teaching during the year 1710, as the town voted November 28 of that year that "Mr. Adams present schoolmaster, be impowered to demand a load of wood of each boy that comes to school this winter." He was the son of Joseph and Hannah (Bass) Adams, born in Braintree, January 4, 1689, graduated at Harvard in 1710. He taught for about three years.

He was succeeded by William Rawson, Jr., in 1713, who taught one year. He was a graduate of Harvard in 1703. He was probably the son of William and Ann Rawson, born in Boston, Dec. 2, 1682.

Nehemiah Hobart, a graduate of Harvard in 1714, taught the same year, for which he received 38 pounds.

Then John Cleverly began to teach in 1715 and continued to teach until 1725 at a salary of from 40 to 44 pounds per year. He was the son of John and Hannah (Savil) Cleverly, born March 9, 1696, in Braintree, died May 5, 1763. He graduated at Harvard in 1715.

In 1716 a vote was passed that a reading and writing school should be kept one-half of the year beginning the first day of October yearly, and a convenient school-house built near the meeting-house as soon as may be. Nehemiah Hayden, Joseph Neal, John Ruggles, Thomas White and Joseph Crosby were chosen to see the vote carried into effect.

The schools will now be divided into three distinct parts for consideration, viz.: the north, middle and south precincts, in their order.

In 1725 the selectmen agreed with Mr. John Cleverly for one year for 44 pounds with the privilege of hiring Jonathan Neal in his stead for six months of the time.

In 1726 Jonathan Neal was paid for teaching one year 33 pounds, 6 sh., 8 pence. He also taught in 1730. He was the son of Benjamin and Lydia (Paine) Neal, born in Braintree, Oct. 13, 1700, graduated at Harvard in 1724.

In 1727 Jonathan Mills taught the school. He was probably the son of John and Hannah Mills, born in Braintree, March 2, 1702, and was the same year settled as pastor of the church in Bel-
lingham.

The school in 1728 and 1729 was taught by Nathan Webb, son of Benjamin and Susanna Webb, born in Braintree, April 9, 1705, and graduated at Harvard in 1725.

In 1730 Jonathan Neal taught as previously mentioned. He was succeeded in 1731 by Joseph Marsh, son of Rev. Joseph and Anne (Fisk) Marsh, born in Braintree, Dec. 7, 1710, graduated at Harvard in 1728. He taught continuously until 1743.

In 1744 Joseph Cleverly succeeded as teacher Mr. Joseph Marsh. He had already taught in the Middle Precinct about five years. He was employed as a teacher in some school in town from 1739 to 1763. It is not always clear where he taught, sometimes in the North, sometimes in the Middle Precinct, and in 1761 he taught two months in Germantown. He was son of John and Hannah (Savil) Cleverly, born in Braintree April 14, 1713, graduated at Harvard in 1733, and died in Quincy about 1802.

He became unpopular in consequence of his being a tory during the struggle for American Independence. It is probable that he taught the Latin School until 1759, for in 1760 Zabdiel Adams was

hired for that purpose and continued in that position during 1761 and 1762. He was the son of Ebenezer and Anne (Boylston) Adams, born in Braintree Nov. 5, 1739, graduated from Harvard in 1759.

Joshua Hayward taught in 1763, son of Joshua and Elizabeth (Niles) Hayward, born in Braintree February 5, 1738. Joseph Penniman taught in 1764 and 1765, son of William and Ruth (Thayer) Penniman, born in Braintree Oct. 5, 1737, graduated at Harvard in 1765, settled as pastor over the Congregational church in Bedford.

He was succeeded by William Mayhew, a graduate of Harvard in 1767, and Oakes Angier, who graduated at Harvard in 1764.

Thomas Edwards taught in 1772. He graduated at Harvard in 1771.

Joseph Crosby, son of Joseph and Anne, born Feb. 9, 1751, in Braintree, graduated at Harvard in 1772, taught in 1773 and 1774. Nathan or Nathaniel Pierce, a graduate of Harvard in 1775, taught in 1775, and John Thaxter, Jr., in 1776.

Jabez Porter, son of William and Phebe (Dorman) Porter, born at Topsfield, Feb. 1, 1723, graduated at Harvard 1743, died at Randolph Jan. 28, 1792. When he came to Braintree I do not know. I first find mention made of him at the birth of his son Samuel in 1763. He taught his first school in the North Precinct in the summer of 1767, for which he received for 4 months labor the

sum of 13 pounds 6 shillings and 8 pence. He continued to teach in some part of the town until 1772. He again commenced teaching in 1784 and continued until 1789. During a portion of his life he was engaged in preparing students for college. He took no active part in public life as I do not find his name mentioned but once in the proceedings of the town.

Thus have I given you the names of the teachers of the grammar or latin school which commenced soon after the incorporation of the town and continued until 1789, with the exception of about seven years during the revolutionary war when I can find no account of it, and presume it was discontinued. The foregoing brief account shows us that those who think that the teachers of former times were exceedingly illiterate men are very much mistaken. Braintree may well boast of her schools and her teachers in former times, and they can also boast of the fathers and mothers who deprived themselves of the luxuries of life in order that their children might have the privileges to gain a good education.

I have already mentioned the schoolhouses at Town Brook and Penn's Hill. In 1716 when the reading and writing school was established in the middle precinct, a vote was passed to erect a house to accommodate the grammar school, between the north meeting-house and Benjamin Webb's land and that the committee chosen have power to make

use of the glass, stones, and bricks of the two old school-houses about the two new ones. But in 1717 the vote was reconsidered, and no school-house was built as contemplated in the north precinct. In 1763 it was voted that a school-house in the north precinct "be erected opposite the ten-mile stake, provided Mr. John Beal will allow a piece of land in exchange for the land where the old pound stood." The committee chosen to have charge of the matter were Col. Joseph Quincy, Capt. Ebenezer Adams and Capt. Benjamin Beal. It was afterwards voted that said committee have the liberty to place a stove or build a chimney in said house as they shall judge most advantageous. These three houses were the only public school-houses built by the town in the north precinct, prior to its incorporation under the name of Quincy in 1792. A change was made in 1757 in the number of the schools in town as seen by the following votes: "Voted that the Grammar school be kept the one-half the time in the north precinct, the other half in the middle precinct the ensuing year." "Voted that an equal sum as shall be necessary for the maintaining a grammar school be employed under the direction of the selectmen for writing and reading schools in the several parts of the north and middle precincts." This vote remained in force until April 24, 1775, when it was voted "that the selectmen be directed to dismiss Mr. Rice, their Grammar School Master as soon as their

present engagements are expired." I find no record of any payment to Mr. Rice. The management of the schools up to 1790 had been placed in the hands of the selectmen, with few exceptions for brief periods.

But in that year a committee of 15 was chosen to consider of what schooling may be necessary the ensuing year. The committee consisted of Peter B. Adams, Esq., Lieut. Seth Spear, Col. Edmund Billings, Lieut. Elijah Veazie and Dea. Ebenezer Adams for the north precinct; Lieut. Edmund Soper, Capt. John Vinton, Mr. Azariah Faxon, Maj. Stephen Penniman and Capt. Silas Wild for the middle precinct; and Lieut. Nathaniel Niles, Mr. Joseph White, Jr., Samuel Bass, Esq., Lieut. Seth Mann and Capt. Elisha Wales for the south precinct. The above committee reported that the sum of 150 pounds (\$500) be appropriated for schooling the ensuing year, and that a grammar school be kept three months in each precinct, such a master to be agreed with as will be willing to teach English as well as Latin, and also writing and cyphering. The remainder of the money to be divided in each precinct according to what they pay for polls and estates, and each precinct to lay out their own money as this committee shall direct. This report was accepted May 31, 1790, and the selectmen directed to agree with a grammar schoolmaster as above described.

In accordance with the foregoing vote Ebenezer Brackett, probably son of James and Mary Brackett, born in Braintree May 7, 1773, and Maj. Samuel Miller Thayer, son of Ebenezer and Rebecca (Miller) Thayer, born in Braintree April 19, 1761, taught the Latin school in 1790 and 1791.

Prior to 1758 but one school was kept in the north precinct, but that year a reading and writing school was taught by Mrs. Jonathan Fessenden, and again in 1759 and 1760. She was the first woman that taught in the north precinct, and was paid 67 cents per week. Susanna Bass, wife of Jonathan, taught in 1767 and 1777.

Benjamin Savil's wife, who was Mary Blanchard, taught in 1767.

Mrs. Abigail Marsh taught in 1778.

Prudence (Spear) Baxter, widow of Daniel, taught 22 weeks in the summer of 1788.

Mrs. Jerusha (Billings) Glover, wife of Elisha, taught in 1775, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, probably at the "Farms."

Mrs. Samuel Jones taught in 1789 and 1790.

Mrs. Sybil Omond taught in 1789.

Mrs. Margaret Curtis, wife of Edward, taught in 1790.

These were all of the females who taught in the north precinct of whom I have any account.

There were other males who taught in the north precinct besides those who taught the Latin schools. Joseph Dyer taught in 1760 two months, for which

he received five dollars a month, boarding himself it is supposed, as no payment was made for his board. It is possible he may have been boarded by the parents of the children who attended the school, or as it was called, "boarded around."

Joseph Cleverly taught in Germantown two months in 1761, and was paid \$6.67 per month.

There was evidently no school-house in German-town at that time, as in 1763 a part of the house of Peter Etter was hired to keep a school in for which he was paid \$1.67 by the town.

In 1761, Zabdiel Adams taught school at the Farms two months at the rate of eight dollars per month.

Daniel Arnold taught from 1769 to 1772 in the north precinct, and also in 1777 from 3 to 4 months in each year for the same wages. He was the son of Ephraim and Rachel (Thayer) Arnold, born in the middle Precinct Dec. 3, 1725. He married Jerusha Glover of Dorchester, Oct. 4, 1763, and settled on the Old Plymouth road near Milton. He was prominent in town and church affairs, and his son Sheriff Joseph Neale Arnold will be remembered by the older inhabitants. But the most prominent of the teachers of the reading and writing schools of the north precinct was Samuel Savil who taught from 1768 to 1791, a period of 23 years. He was the son of Benjamin and Mary (Blanchard) Savil, born in Braintree Aug. 2, 1747. His usual pay was usually about \$6.67 a month, but in consequence of the depreciation of

the currency, he received in 1781 for teaching 6 months the sum of 900 pounds, or \$500 a month. This was what was called "continental currency."

In 1772, Lemuel Badcock, who afterwards spelled his name Babcock, taught, and again in 1790 and 1791. In 1785 Josiah Veazie taught at Hough's Neck two months at the rate of \$8.67 a month. Ebenezer Veazie taught in 1789, 1790 and 1791. They were probably natives of the north precinct.

James Bowers taught 8 weeks in 1791.

March 15, 1791, the town raised 150 pounds for schooling the ensuing year, and chose a committee of 15 to divide the money between the three precincts. The committee chosen were Lieut. Seth Spear, Peter B. Adams, Esq., Col. Edmund Billings, Lieut. Elijah Veazie, Dea. Ebenezer Adams from the north; Maj. Stephen Penniman, Lieut. Ambrose Salisbury, Ebenezer Thayer, Jr., Esq., Lieut. Nathaniel Thayer, Capt. Silas Wild, from the middle; Joseph White, Jr., Lieut. Seth Mann, Samuel Bass, Esq., Lieut. Nathaniel Niles, Capt. Elisha Wales, from the south precinct.

The proportion of the north precinct was \$148.75, of the middle, \$142, and of the south, \$127.17.

Benjamin Turner was paid \$80 for teaching the grammar school from June 6, to Dec. 10, 1791. He was the son of Seth and Rebecca (Vinton) Turner, born in Braintree Sept. 26, 1764, graduated at Harvard, 1791, became a physician at Milton and died about 1831.

We now come to the middle precinct.

The children of that precinct were compelled to travel a long distance to obtain their education. The nearest were compelled to go more than a mile, while the farthest lived about six miles away. As early as 1690 the settlement had extended southward as far as the railroad bridge on North street in Randolph, and in another direction nearly to the Holbrook line. But the citizens of the north precinct were unwilling to remove the school-house farther south than the town brook or as they called it "the heart of the town" until some years later when, as we have seen, it was removed to near the great oak tree at Penn's Hill. But in 1716, the people of the south end of the town rose in their might, and asserted their rights. In that year it was "voted by the inhabitants of Braintree regularly assembled that there should be a school kept in the south end of this town, for one-half of the year, each year yearly, beginning the first day of October yearly, for reading and writing (besides the present grammar school) and that to be at the charge of the town." "Then also voted that a convenient school-house for writing and reading be built and set up in some convenient place in the south end of this town, near the meeting house as soon as may be, and as the committee hereafter named and appointed shall see meet, at the charge of the town." The committee consisted of Nehemiah Hayden, Joseph Neal, John Ruggles,

Thomas White and Joseph Crosby. That the school-house was built that year is certain, as "October 1, 1716, the selectmen agreed with Joseph Parmenter to keep the school at Monatoquod for reading and writing half a year for six shillings a week (1.00) and his diet." He lived with Peter Hobart, who resided on the east side of Washington street just south of the residence of E. Watson Arnold. In 1717 he received eleven shillings (\$1.83) a week, he furnishing his own diet. He was the son of Robert and Leah (Wheatly) Parmenter, born in Braintree, Dec. 20, 1655, died Feb. 20, 1737, aged 81 years. He served in the office of Town Clerk 28 years. He taught school 11 years, or until 1727. He fell dead, during divine service, in the pulpit. The school-house in which he taught was probably situated on the 20 acre lot sold by Samuel French to Ebenezer Penniman, and now in the occupancy of Charles F. Penniman as his homestead, in the conveyance said to be "formerly known as the school-house lot." Samuel Hayden was paid \$10 for building the chimney; Nehemiah Hayden, \$13.33 for nails and labor; Benjamin Hayden, \$16.67 for boards; Richard Thayer, \$3.67 for boards; and upon settlement, Nehemiah Hayden was allowed \$3.33 for something unexplained, making a total of \$47. The first school-house in Braintree cost \$47 in 1716, the last in 1892, about \$33,000. To show the relative amount paid by each precinct that year, it

is only necessary to say that a rate was laid in 1716, of which the north precinct paid \$9.91, and south \$8.88. This school-house was used by the town for 47 years. But in 1763, the town "voted that there be a school-house built in each precinct at the expense of the town." The committee to plan the bigness of the houses, the manner in which they should be built, and to let out the building to the lowest bidder.

The doing of the committee, namely :—Samuel Niles, Esq., Capt. John Hayward and Mr. Nathaniel Wales, are unknown to your humble servant, with the exception that a school-house was built according to the vote of the town, on the southeast corner of Benjamin's Hayden's land at the lane leading to Mr. Lemuel Thayer's. This house was on the corner of what is now Washington and West streets. It was the only school-house owned by the town in the middle precinct prior to the incorporation of Quincy and Randolph. Some 40 years after its erection it was sold to Ebenezer Thayer, Esq., who let it for a dwelling, after removing it below the Lyceum on Washington street.

Atherton Wales succeeded Joseph Parmenter as teacher in the Middle Precinct, and taught 13 years. He was the son of Elder Nathaniel and Joanna (Faxon) Wales, born in Braintree, March 8, 1704, graduated at Harvard 1726, married Mary, daughter of Rev. Samuel Niles, Nov. 5, 1730, and was settled afterwards as pastor of the church in Marsh-

field. In 1737 he agreed "to teach the school the full year of 12 months for 56 pounds if he moved four months in the year in any part of the precinct from the schoolhouse, (and if not) then he is to have but fifty pounds." As he was paid but 50 pounds, it may be presumed that the school was kept in the town schoolhouse.

In 1740 Elisha Niles was the teacher. He was the son of Rev. Samuel Niles, born in Braintree, July 30, 1719, graduated at Harvard in 1739, served as Town Clerk and Treasurer from 1753 to the time of his death, which took place July 1, 1776. His body lies in the burial place on Dyer's Hill. He was a prominent citizen, and an ardent patriot. He taught in the public schools of Braintree 23 years, although not continuously, but from 1740 to 1769.

The first agreement made with Elisha Niles was that he should keep school one year for 66 pounds, and to remove and keep the school in three several places if he be desired and provision made for it. Again, in 1741 he engaged to move twice, viz.: to the ironworks and near Nathaniel Thayer's. At this time dwellings had sprung up through Commercial, Liberty, Middle, Peach, South Washington, Pond, West and Plain streets, and the residents wished for schools nearer their homes. They were obliged to furnish a room in which the school was kept, sometimes in a private house and sometimes in a small building erected by subscription for that

purpose. One of these buildings was built near Nathaniel Thayer's at the parting of the ways; that is, what is now the corner of Washington and Pond streets. About 1755 a schoolhouse was built on Commercial street by the residents of East Braintree. In 1746 the house of Dea. James Penniman was hired for that purpose. He resided on Town street, near the old Almshouse. At a later date a house was built near the Randolph line to accommodate a part of the south precinct. In 1756 Widow Abigail Thayer was paid 50 cents for to make good the damage done to her windows in the time when a school was kept at her house.

The school in James Penniman's house was opened Jan. 7, 1746, and kept until March 22, and was taught by Dea. James Penniman. He was the son of James and Abigail (Thayer) Penniman, born in Braintree Dec. 1, 1708, graduated at Harvard, 1730; married Dorcas Vinton in 1728; died May 24, 1788, and had by her 11 children. He taught 35 years in succession, that is from 2 to 3 months each year. His pay was \$6.67 per month usually.

Ephraim Arnold taught first in 1747, and taught until 1754. He was the son of Ephraim and Rachel (Mekusett) Arnold, born in Braintree, Jan. 28, 1723. The same year Nathaniel Wales taught but was only a yearling.

Azariah Faxon taught in 1754 and again from 1770 to 1787, a period of 11 years in all. He was the son of Richard and Anna (Brackett) Faxon

born in Braintree, March 23, 1731, graduated at Harvard in 1752, and died July 2, 1802.

A person by the name of Cheever taught in the year 1751. I have no further account of him. Isaac Doggett taught in 1753, but I do not know whether it was the father or the son, as there were two of that name.

Thomas Allen taught in 1755, probably at the Iron-works.

Jonathan Allen taught in 1756 and 1757. They were both natives of Braintree.

Dea. Moses French taught first in 1757, and taught 16 years in winter, but not continuously. He was the son of Moses and Esther (Thayer) French, born in Braintree Sept. 16, 1731, and died January 19, 1807.

About the year 1752 there appears to have been some dissatisfaction in the management of the schools in the middle precinct. They had hitherto been managed by the selectmen.

At a special meeting held May 18, 1752, it was voted that the school in the middle precinct be ordered by a committee to be chose from the said precinct, and Samuel Niles, Jr., William Penniman and John Hayward were chosen. This committee engaged five females to teach school in the summer, three months each, in different parts of the town. They were paid at the rate of \$2.41 per month, with a single exception. One of them received \$2.80 per month. These were the first females

employed by the town of Braintree as teachers. But it seems it did not give general satisfaction, as the next year the selectmen were to manage the schools and no female teachers were employed again until 1755. After that year, summer schools taught by females, became the custom and were continued until the separation of the town.

The first female teachers were Mrs. Susanna, wife of Samuel Wild; Mrs. Mary Hayward; Mrs. Mary Jones; Mrs. John Ludden and Mrs. Ruth Capen.

Mrs. Susanna Wild taught probably in Liberty street 25 years until 1779 from 2 to 4 months each year.

Mrs. Mary Hayward about 4 years; Mrs. Mary Jones, only 1 year.

Mrs. Ruth, wife of John Ludden, until 1790, a period of 32 years.

Mrs. Ruth Capen but a single year.

But the female teachers are so numerous that I have space to mention only the names and dates of the others. Mrs. Sarah Arnold; Mrs. Mary, wife of Boylston Adams, 6 years; Mrs. Mercy Brackett; Anna, wife of Ephraim Arnold; Mrs. Sarah Collins; Hannah, wife of Eliot Clark; wife of Ebenezer Clark, 6 years; Elizabeth Capernaum in the Pond street school-house; Hannah Chessman; Mary Doubleday at the Ironworks; Mrs. Mary Denton; Mary, wife of James Faxon; Sarah Faxon; Elizabeth French; wife of Samuel Holbrook; Mrs.

Samuel Holbrook, Widow Rebecca Hunt; Mrs. James Hollis; Mrs. Jacob Hayden; Mrs. Margaret Hayward; Mrs. Samuel Hunt; Mrs. Sarah Hayward; Mrs. Hannah Hayward; Mrs. Caleb Hunt; Widow Sarah Hayden; Widow Jane Noyes; Mrs. Samuel Newcomb; Mrs. Meshech Penniman; Miss Penniman; Esther Richardson at the Ironworks; Abigail Richards; Mrs. Richard Thayer; daughter of Richard Thayer; Mrs. Samuel W. Thayer; Mrs. Nathaniel Thayer, in her own house; Mrs. Asa Wild; Mrs. Silas Wild, 9 years. Mrs. Mary Vinton; Hannah Wales in the schoolhouse near Ensign John Hollis, Middle street, in 1783.

These were the persons who as teachers in our public schools moulded the characters of the rising generation. Uneducated as they must have been, they taught only the simpler branches of education, such as reading, writing and a slight knowledge of numbers. The main study taught was the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. One can imagine how much education a child could get in the short space of three months in each year, under a teacher whose pay was from 62 cents to one dollar per week. Besides these summer schools they had from two to three months in the winter taught by male teachers for the larger scholars in the town, of some of these teachers I have already spoken.

Samuel Clark, son of Hobart Clark, taught in 1773 and 1774 for \$6.67 per month. William Clark taught in 1760, six months for \$50. Hobart

Clark taught at the Ironworks 6 years. John Cleverly at the same place in 1766 and 1767. John French taught in 1790 Dr. Daniel Fogg in 1782 and 1789. Samuel Holbrook in 1776. Benjamin Hayden, Jr., taught three years and his brother Zebah Hayden 4 years. Jonathan Mills taught 1 year, Maj. Jeremiah Niles 3 years, Rev. Joseph Penniman taught 7 years, William Penniman, Jr., 3 years, Israel Peaks, Jr., 1 year, Stephen Penniman 1 year, Edmund Soper 5 years at the Ironworks, Ambrose Salisbury 1 year at the same place. Samuel M. Thayer 6 years, Elisha Thayer a number of years, Atherton Thayer 1 year, John Thomas, Jr., taught 11 years, Calvin Thayer 2 years, Lieut Nathaniel Thayer 5 years in his own house, Benjamin Turner 2 years, who was a graduate from Harvard in 1791, Thomas White 8 years at the Ironworks, Capt. Nathaniel Wales 3 years, Ludovicus Weld 1 year.

The winter schools were from two to three months in length each year, and the average pay of the teacher \$6.67 per month.

The South Precinct now composed of the towns of Randolph and Holbrook was not settled until after 1700 with the exception of a few houses on what is now North street in Randolph. The valley of the Cochato was bought by the town of Braintree of the town of Boston about the year 1700 and a few years after divided among the inhabitants of Braintree. The settlements were made mostly by

Braintree men from the other precincts. From the north precinct came families by the names of Paine, Nightingale, Spear, Bass and Belcher. From the middle precinct came Niles, Thayer, Hayward, French, Wales, Bagley, Penniman, Curtis, Hayden and Copeland. In 1728 the precinct had increased to some 30 families, and desired to have a school established in their midst but the town refused so to do, neither would they abate their tax in supporting the schools in the other precincts, although they were compelled to send their children about 5 miles to the grammar school and 7 miles to the Latin school. July 27, 1730, an allowance of 8 pounds was made from the town treasury towards supporting a school in the new south precinct, May 21, 1733, they were allowed to draw out of the town treasury so much of the rents of the town land and the interest money their part according to what they are rated in the town rate. It is probable that their proportion was paid to them although no order was paid by the town as appears by the records until Feb. 16, 1741, when Thomas French and Peter Thayer were paid 22 pounds, 2 shillings and three pence as the proportion of the precinct. In 1745 their proportion was 8 pounds, 5 shillings. From 1740 to 1745 there was a financial crisis and money was in old tenor and new tenor bills. Old tenor bills were worth about 33 cents on the dollar, so that 24 pounds in old tenor money was worth only 8 pounds in new tenor cur-

rency. It was not until 1763 that the south precinct was admitted to equal privileges, when the town built 3 new school-houses at the town's expense. The south precinct had liberty to provide a place to erect said school-house, Dea. Thomas Wales, Dr. Moses Baker and Dea. Samuel Bass were the committee who had the matter in charge. This was the only school-house built by the town in the south precinct. There were others probably built by private neighborhood subscription. Four schools were kept in different parts of the precinct, but I cannot locate them.

The teachers were as follows :

Ebenezer Alden, M. D., 1786, 1787, 1788, 1790, Samuel Allen, 1779, Ebenezer Crane, 1770, Nathaniel Brown 1776, Josiah Babcock 1773, 1774, James Babcock, 1772, Samuel Bass 1784, John French 1787, Elijah French 1785, 1786, John Faxson 1786, Joshua Hayward 1770, 1772, 1774, 1775, Andrew Hunt 1770, 1771, 1772, 1775, 1777, 1781, Edward Jones 1771, Maj. Jeremiah Niles 1789, Jabez Porter 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, 1785, 1786, Samuel Savil 1772, 1776, Eliphalet Sawin, Jr. 1788. He died the same year teaching only 6 weeks. Isaac Thayer 1772, 1773, 1774, 1775, 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, 1782, Moses Taft, Jr. 1777, 1778. Eleazer Taft 1778, 1781, 1782, Phineas Taft 1784, 1787, 1788, Jabez Thayer 1771, 1775, Bartholomew Thayer 1780, 1785, Zaccheus Thayer 1772, 1774, 1780, 1783, 1784, 1788, 1789,

1790, Seth Turner, Jr. 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790, Benjamin Turner 1791, Benjamin Webb 1777, Capt. Jacob Wales 1781, Daniel Wild 1786, 1787, 1789.

Female teachers were: Reliance Allen 2 years, Esther Dyer 3 years, Mrs. Emms 1 year, Mrs. Ephraim Hunt 3 years, Ruth Porter 2 years, Mary Porter 1 year, Polly Davenport Packard, who afterwards married Thomas White, 1 year, Mrs. Josiah Thayer 1 year, Phebe Thayer, 5 years, Sukey Taft 2 years, Kate Taft 2 years, Sally Turner 2 years, Hannah Wild 2 years, Abigail Wales 2 years, Mrs. Micah White 1 year, Mrs. Simeon Hayward, 2 years.

The above sketch brings the reader down to the separation of the towns in 1792.

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